ECB Loan

4174. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) is finalising plans to raise nearly Rs. 1,500 crore from the market in the next financial year through a combination of External Commercial Borrowings (ECB), domestic debt and a Global Depository Receipts (GDR) issue;

(b) if so, the broad features of its expansion plans, plant-wise; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) to ensure increased efficiency of operations, reduction in energy consumption, continuous casting and oxygen conversion in all its plants?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) is planning to raise about Rs. 1500 crores through various instruments. However, tying up of specific sources for raising funds and the quantum thereof would depend on the market conditions.

(b) As per the broad approach being adopted for investment in SAIL Plants/units during 9th Plan, various schemes in different categories viz. additions/ modifications, schemes related to extension/ expansion, quality improvement, replacement and pollution control etc. would be considered based on techno-economic viability of each scheme and the availability of funds.

Some of the investment needs identified in the 9th Plan document in respect of 4 Integrated Plants of SAIL, are as follows :

BSP : Development of Rowghat Mine, New Continuous Casting Plant, Coal Dust Injection in BFs, Beam Mill

DSP : Medium Structural Mill, Bloom Caster, Coal Dust Injection

RSP : Renovation of CRM (Phase-II)

BSL : Coal Dust Injection, Additional Slab Caster, Additional Oxygen Plant, Ladle Furnace

The Government has yet to approve SAIL's 9th Five Year Plan.

(c) SAIL has embarked on modernisation and technological upgradation of its plants which aim at progressively replacing open hearth and ingot casting by more efficient Basic Oxygen furnace and Continuous Casting. This will increase yield, reduce energy consumption and improve quality of products. In addition Operating and Maintenance practices are being improved to increase efficiency of operation.

Panel Doctors Under ESI Scheme

4175. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) the number of panel doctors in the country under the Employees State Insurance Scheme;

(b) whether there is a machinery to identify the grievances of the panel doctors;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the nature of such grievances noticed by the Government during each of the last three years;

(e) the steps taken to redress these grievances;

(f) the present honorarium fixed for panel doctors; and

(g) the time by which the rate of honorarium is proposed to be revised?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) 3076 (as on 31st March, 1996).

(b) to (g) Medical care under the Employees' State Insurance Scheme is provided through Corporation's own dispensaries and hospitals and in some States also through some private doctors empanelled for this purpose. The fee payable to such panel doctors and other terms of conditions are determined by the concerned State Government with the approval of the Corporation. At present panel doctors are being paid @ Rs. 60/- per IP family unit per annum in State of West Bengal and Goa and @ Rs. 50/- per IP family unit per annum in the State of Punjab, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. This being a mutually and voluntarily agreed arrangement between the private practitioners and the State Government concerned, the need for any grievance redressal machinery does not arise.

Direct Train Service

4176. SHRI HARADHAN ROY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that there is no direct train service from Asansol-Raniganj-Durgapur to Assam;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the people of Assam as well as the people of the coal belt and industrial belt of those places are agitating for a long time for introduction of train service;

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the time by which the said train is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Some representations have been received in this regard.

(c) and (d) Introduction of a train from Asansol/ Raniganj/Durgapur to Assam has been examined but not found feasible at present due to operational and resource constraints.

Direct Rail Link between Bandel and Kalyani/Ranaghat/Krishnanagar

4177. DR. ASIM BALA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the people of West Bengal consistently demanding for a direct rail-link between Bandel and Kalyani/Ranaghat/ Krishnanagar by passing Naihati;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that a curved rail-link is existing short of Naihati which is presently submerged in soil;

(d) if so, whether any attempt has been made to make use of the curve;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the steps to be taken now to use the said curve to fulfil the demand of the people of West Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Some demands have been received from the people of West Bengal.

(c) The curve line near Naihati is not in existence now.

(d) to (f) Do not arise.

Revenue Earned in North Bengal

4178. PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the revenue collected out of tourism in North Bengal during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether the Government have any plan to improve tourism in North Bengal;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) According to the estimates worked out by the State Government, on the basis of average expenditure per tourist, the tourism earnings by the tourism industry in the six districts of North Bengal during the last three years were as given below :-

Year	Tourist Expenditure (Rs. Crores)
1994	51.98
1995	54.55
1996	55.63

(b) to (d) The infrastructure development of tourism in any place is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Governments. However, financial assistance is provided by the Central Department of Tourism on the basis of specific proposals received from them, inter-se priorities and availability of resources. The projects assisted by the Central Department of Tourism for improving tourism in North Bengal during Eighth Plan period include the following :-

S. No.	Name of the Project	Amount sanctioned (Rs. in lakhs)
1.	Augmentation of facilities at Mainak Tourist Lodge, Siliguri	29.00
2.	Tourist Lodge at Pashupati, Darjeeling	24.14
3.	Yatri Niwas at New Jalpaiguri	44.89
4.	Tourist Lodge at Darjeeling	25.00
5.	Tourist Lodge at Jalpaiguri	30.22

Passenger Amenities at Nellore and Gudur Railway Stations

4179. SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that no foot over bridge, additional booking facilities, retiring rooms and other passenger amenities etc. have been provided at Nellore and Gudur Railway Stations of South Central Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are also aware that no inspections by officers at higher level are conducted to improve the conditions;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government to provide adequate passenger amenities at the said Railway stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) A sub-way at Nellore and a foot-over-bridge at Gudur connecting platforms are provided. Booking facilities, retiring rooms and other amenities commensurate with the volume of traffic are available at both the stations.

(c) to (e) Both the stations were inspected recently by senior Officers and as a result improvement to circulating area and surface of platform No 1 at Nellore has been completed recently. At Gudur works of VIP lounge and improvement to circulating area have been taken up.